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# World Heritage

# 42 COM

**WHC/18/42.COM/9A**

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**UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC  
AND CULTURAL ORGANIZATION**

**CONVENTION CONCERNING THE PROTECTION OF  
THE WORLD CULTURAL AND NATURAL HERITAGE**

**WORLD HERITAGE COMMITTEE**

**Forty-second session**

**Manama, Bahrain  
24 June - 4 July 2018**

**Item 9 of the Provisional Agenda: Global Strategy for a representative,  
balanced and credible World Heritage List**

**9A. Progress Report on the reflection concerning the Upstream Processes**

## **SUMMARY**

Further to Decision **41 COM 9A**, this document presents a report on the implementation of the upstream pilot projects since the 41st session of the World Heritage Committee. It also includes a list of Upstream Process Requests received and a proposed way forward for their implementation.

**Draft Decision: 42 COM 9A**, see Point IV.

## I. BACKGROUND

1. At its 32nd session (Quebec City, 2008), the World Heritage Committee launched a process of reflection on the future of the *World Heritage Convention*. In this framework, the Committee, aware of the challenges that exist in the process for nominating a property to the World Heritage List, proposed an initiative entitled Upstream Processes. The aim was to find options for improving and strengthening the current nomination process.
2. In 2010, by Decision **34 COM 13**, the World Heritage Committee, encouraged the World Heritage Centre to “follow up on the approaches and recommendations of the Phuket expert meeting” on “Upstream Processes for Nominations”. In particular, the Committee requested the World Heritage Centre “in cooperation with the Advisory Bodies and other relevant organizations, to invite one or two States Parties from each of the UNESCO regional groups to undertake, on an experimental basis, voluntary pilot projects related to identifying options and preparing dossiers for nomination”. The UNESCO Electoral Groups subsequently selected two pilot projects per region, except Group I – Western Europe and North America – which refrained from making any proposal.
3. In 2011, by Decision **35 COM 12C** the World Heritage Committee welcomed “all the actions undertaken to improve the processes and practices prior to consideration by the World Heritage Committee of a nomination (the ‘Upstream Processes’)” and took note “of the pilot projects that have been chosen to implement this experimental approach”. Following Decision **40 COM 9A**, the experimental phase of this process could be considered concluded. In this regard, and out of the 10 pilot projects originally selected 3 eventually resulted in an inscription on the World Heritage List (**South Namib Erg** Namibia, **Rock Drawings in the Hail region**, Saudi Arabia and **Cultural and Industrial Landscape of Fray Bentos**, Uruguay); 2 were phased out (**Dinaric Karst Serial Nomination**, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Italy, Montenegro, Serbia and Slovenia and **Gadara (Modern Um Qeis or Qays)**, Jordan); and 5 are advancing at a different pace. This document details project by project the progress made concerning the latter since the 40th session of the World Heritage Committee (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016).
4. It is important to emphasize that application of the Upstream Process approach does not imply that a site concerned would ultimately be inscribed on the World Heritage List. The main aim of the Upstream Processes is to reduce the number of properties that experience significant problems during the nomination process, and to avoid significant investment in financial and human resources where the proposed sites do not demonstrate a potential for Outstanding Universal Value, and to guide such sites to alternative and more appropriate means of international recognition.
5. In 2015, at its 39th session, the World Heritage Committee included the Upstream Process in the text of the *Operational Guidelines*, thereby recognizing that the Upstream Process had extended far beyond the pilot projects and had become a mainstream process considered beneficial to many States Parties.
6. By Decision **40 COM 9A**, the Committee invited comments from the States Parties on the draft format for upstream support requests and on the wider issues with regard to the implementation of the Upstream Process. In order to collect feedback from States Parties on these issues, a reflection survey on Upstream Process was launched online on the World Heritage Centre’s website in January 2017 and it registered a very high response rate. Following the online survey responses, further reflections carried out by the Advisory Bodies and the Secretariat and a fruitful debate at the 41st session (Cracow,

2017), the Committee adopted Decision **41 COM 9A** which could be considered as a turning point in the establishment of the Upstream Process as a statutory procedure. Through this decision the Committee addressed several fundamental issues from a procedural point of view and included in the mandate of the extended Ad-Hoc Working Group an item on the definition of the Upstream Process and the effectiveness of the Global Strategy for a balanced and representative World Heritage List. The outcome of the Ad-Hoc Working Group are presented in Document WHC/18/42.COM/12A.

## II. PROGRESS MADE ON THE SELECTED PILOT PROJECTS

7. Pilot project on **Ancient Kano City Walls and Associated Sites**, Nigeria  
Because of the persisting situation of insecurity in the region, no progress has been reported since the last session of the Committee.
8. Pilot Project on the **Batanes Protected Landscapes and Seascapes**, Philippines  
No further progress has been reported since last two sessions of the Committee.
9. Pilot project on **Coral Stone Mosques of the Maldives**, Maldives  
As follow up to the recommendations of the January 2017 International Workshop, the Department of Heritage, Maldives, organised a national workshop from 5-7 December 2017 to bring together local experts and stakeholders to elaborate on management and protection strategies of the Coral Stone mosques for nomination to the World Heritage List. A proposal to develop a management plan template that can be used in Coral Stone Mosques of Maldives and identified issues that need to be addressed is the key result of this December 2017 Workshop. The 2nd phase of the International Assistance Request has now been terminated and the final report has been uploaded on the World Heritage Centre International Assistance database.
10. Pilot project on the **Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid Region**, Albania and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia  
Following technical assistance provided to the team of experts convened by the Albanian authorities, the State Party submitted in February 2018 the Nomination Dossier for the extension of the existing mixed World Heritage property "Natural and Cultural Heritage of the Ohrid region" (FYROM). Visibility activities accompany major project achievements and include active social media campaigns to raise awareness of the local communities in the Lake Ohrid region about the objectives of the Pilot Project (more detailed information: <http://whc.unesco.org/en/lake-ohrid-region>).
11. Pilot project on the **Grenadines Islands Group**, Grenada, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines  
Following consultations between the concerned States Parties, the Advisory Bodies and the World Heritage Centre, a capacity-building initiative financed by the UNESCO/Netherlands Funds-in-Trust was elaborated with the support of the World Heritage Centre. A workshop on inventories led by international experts in both cultural and natural heritage took place in the first trimester 2017 in Grenada, followed by a field visit and by tutored research and broad consultations in view of the update of national inventories. The final report of the international experts, including a comprehensive bibliography, was distributed to beneficiaries and stakeholders in November 2017. This report contains a set of recommendations in view of the establishment of cultural and natural heritage inventories in Grenada, and in Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, which focus on strategies, funding, networking, institutional arrangements, policy implementation, awareness raising and potential World Heritage nominations.

### III. UPSTREAM PROCESS REQUESTS RECEIVED

12. By Decision **41 COM 9A**, the Committee adopted the Upstream Process *request* format. As a means of ensuring a fairer and more equitable use of the human and financial resources available while respecting the priorities that have been set by the Committee, it also established a timeline for receiving requests for upstream advice, to be sent to the the World Heritage Centre, with two deadlines per year: 31 March and 31 October. In the same decision the Committee decided to give priority to requests for preparation or revision of Tentative Lists, to Least Developed Countries, Low-Income and Lower-Middle Income Countries and Small Island Developing States, followed by the mechanism of Paragraph 61.c) of the Operational Guidelines. Finally, recognizing the limited available capacity of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, and on the basis of the experience acquired so far in providing Upstream advice, the Committee decided that, on a trial basis, ten new Upstream Process requests will be processed per year.
13. By the 31 March 2018 deadline, the World Heritage Centre received 16 Upstream Process requests (see Annex I to this document). Three of these requests concern the revision or creation of Tentative Lists. In terms of regional breakdown, 6 of the requests are from Africa, 4 from Latin America and the Caribbean, 1 from Asia-Pacific and 5 from Europe and North America. As to the criteria of eligibility for receiving financial support, 5 requests are from Least Developed Countries, 3 from Lower Middle Income Countries, 4 from Upper Middle Income Countries, 1 from a Low Income Economy country and 3 from High Income Countries.
14. The Secretariat and the Advisory Bodies would like to note with satisfaction that the newly established modalities concerning the Upstream process have brought very positive results, in terms of States Parties who have requested support. It is very encouraging, in the light of the Global Strategy, that the list of requests includes 3 States Parties without any property inscribed on the World Heritage List and 5 with up to two properties.
15. On the basis of the combination of all criteria outlined above, the World Heritage Centre established a list, in order of priority. Despite the fact that the number of requests received exceeds the cap of ten new Upstream Process requests per year set in Decision 41 COM 9A, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies agreed to make an effort in trying to accommodate all of the requests in the best timely manner possible, starting with the first ten requests on the list. At present, the Advisory Bodies are in the process of assessing the scope of what each of the requests received involve in terms of timeframe, experts and desk study. Also, given that the number of requests received exceeds the cap of ten, it is suggested to set the following deadline for receiving upstream requests at 31 March 2019.
16. It is to be noted that, in accordance with the established standard procedure of the Advisory Bodies, the advice to be provided in the framework of each Upstream Process project, is reviewed and endorsed by the respective Advisory Bodies Panels. Therefore, this may entail a slightly longer timeline, depending on the Panel schedule. Furthermore, it is worth noting that this additional activity of the Panels is currently not budgeted in the respective contracts of the Advisory Bodies.
17. As already noted, advice provided to States Parties in the Upstream Process should be an opportunity to also target the longer term perspective by capacity-building activities and training to the job heritage experts, site managers, professionals in the field of conservation. In this regard, it is useful to note the work of the programme on nominations in Africa, implemented by the African World Heritage Fund (AWHF) in

partnership with the Advisory Bodies and World Heritage Centre, in particular the courses on the preparation of nominations gathering professionals of the region.

#### IV. DRAFT DECISION

##### **Draft Decision: 42 COM 9A**

*The World Heritage Committee,*

1. *Having examined Document WHC/18/42.COM/9A,*
2. *Recalling Decisions **34 COM 13.III, 35 COM 12C, 36 COM 12C, 37 COM 9, 38 COM 9A, 39 COM 11, 40 COM 9A and 41 COM 9A**, adopted at its 34th (Brasilia, 2010), 35th (UNESCO, 2011), 36th (Saint-Petersburg, 2012), 37th (Phnom Penh, 2013), 38th (Doha, 2014), 39th (Bonn, 2015), 40th (Istanbul/UNESCO, 2016) and 41st (Cracow, 2017) sessions respectively,*
3. *Also recalling the integration of the Upstream Processes in Paragraphs 71 and 122 of the Operational Guidelines,*
4. *Further reiterates that, in order to be effective, the upstream support should ideally take place at an early stage, preferably at the moment of the preparation or revision of the States Parties' Tentative Lists;;*
5. *Welcomes the actions undertaken to improve the processes and practices prior to the consideration of nominations by the World Heritage Committee, and commends the States Parties, the World Heritage Centre and the Advisory Bodies for the pilot projects that registered progress;*
6. *Also takes note of the Upstream Process requests received by the deadline of 31 March 2018 and also commends States Parties having submitted these requests;*
7. *Recognizing the limited available capacity of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies, and on the basis of the experience acquired so far in providing Upstream advice, further takes note of the willingness of the World Heritage Centre and Advisory Bodies to process all requests received in the best timely manner possible and, given that the number of requests received exceeds the set up cap of ten new Upstream Process requests per year decides to set the next deadline for receiving upstream requests at 31 March 2019 and to review and prioritize Upstream Process requests once a year with the deadline for submission to the World Heritage Centre on 31 March;*
8. *Requests the World Heritage Centre, in collaboration with the Advisory Bodies, to present a progress report on the ongoing pilot projects as well as on the implementation of Upstream Process requests received, for consideration by the World Heritage Committee at its 43rd session in 2019.*

**List of requests for upstream support received by 31 March 2018.**

These requests have been submitted either via the upstream format, or via Preparatory Assistance.

The prioritization has been made on the basis of Decision **41 COM 9A**, paragraphs 11 and 12:

11. Also decides that the Upstream Process requests will be reviewed and prioritized twice a year with deadlines for submission to the World Heritage Centre on 31 March and 31 October through giving priority for preparation or revision of Tentative Lists, to Least Developed Countries, Low-Income and Lower-Middle Income Countries and Small Island Developing States, followed by the mechanism of Paragraph 61.c) of the Operational Guidelines;
12. In order to ensure a fairer and more equitable use of the resources available, whether in terms of funding or in terms of staff, further decides to apply the prioritization system established by the mechanism of Paragraph 61.c) of the Operational Guidelines in conjunction with the criteria of eligibility for receiving financial support for the provision of upstream advice;

Region	Country	Type of economy	C/N	TL / NOM	Type of activity / site
AFR	Swaziland	LMIC	C/N	TL	Revision of Tentative List
LAC	Honduras	LMIC	C/N	TL	Creation of Tentative List
AFR	Djibouti	<b>LDC</b>	N	NOM	Parc national de la Forêt du Day ( <i>on Tentative List since 2008</i> )
AFR	South Sudan	<b>LDC</b>	N	NOM	Boma-Badingilo Migratory Landscape ( <i>on Tentative List since 2017</i> )
AFR	Eritrea	<b>LDC</b>	C	NOM	Qoahito Cultural Landscape ( <i>on Tentative List since 2011</i> )
AFR	Malawi	<b>LDC</b>	C	NOM	Malawi Slave Routes & Dr. David Livingstone Trail ( <i>on Tentative List since 2011</i> )
LAC	Dominican Rep.	<b>UMIC + SIDS</b>	C	NOM	Sitio Arqueológico de la Villa La Isabela ( <i>on Tentative List since 2018</i> )
APA	DPR Korea	LIE	C	NOM	Mount Kumgang ( <i>on Tentative List since 2000</i> )
AFR	Ethiopia	<b>LDC</b>	N	NOM	Bale Mountains National Park ( <i>on Tentative List since 2008</i> )
EUR	Ukraine	LMIC	C	NOM	Archaeological Site "Stone Tomb" ( <i>on Tentative List since 2006</i> )
LAC	Peru	<b>UMIC</b>	C/N	TL	Revision
LAC	Brazil	<b>UMIC</b>	N	NOM	Lençóis Maranhenses National Park ( <i>on Tentative List since 2017</i> )

Region	Country	Type of economy	C/N	TL / NOM	Type of activity / site
EUR	Turkey	UMIC	C	NOM	Yesemek Quarry and Sculpture Workshop ( <i>on Tentative List since 2012</i> )
EUR	Norway	HIC	C	NOM	Varjjat Siida ( <i>not on Tentative List</i> )
EUR	Denmark	HIC	C	NOM	Viking Age Ring Fortresses ( <i>on Tentative List since 2018</i> )
EUR	Germany	HIC	C	NOM	Branitz Park ( <i>not on Tentative List</i> )

C = cultural heritage N = natural heritage TL = Tentative List NOM = nomination file	AFR = Africa APA = Asia-Pacific EUR = Europe & North America LAC = Latin America & the Caribbean
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LDC = Least Developed Country  
LIE = Low Income Economy  
LMIC = Lower Middle Income Country  
SIDS = Small Island Developing State  
UMIC = Upper Middle Income Country  
HIC = High Income Country